

ter of war in the lines of Henry V., who, in addressing his troops before battle, says:

"When the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger."

Is it reasonable to suppose that men, as they become more humane, will continue to uphold a practice so demoralizing in its effects?

The *wastefulness* of war, too, is a strong argument against its continuance. It is impossible to find language strong enough to picture the horrors of war, in its desolation of farm and field, of factory and village; in its destruction of human lives; and in the misery and anguish which always attend it. History is full of its tragedy.

In the thirty five years from 1855 to 1890 there were killed in America and Europe two million one hundred and eighty thousand men. The cost of the wars in which these men were killed amounted to nearly thirteen billion dollars ["The War System," by Rev. Ruen Thomas, D. D.]—figures so vast that they convey no idea to the mind, and yet, this is what transpired in this advanced 19th century, in 35 years of our own time. Had this money been spent in grappling with the great questions of poverty and ignorance, or given to charitable purposes, and the questions which these wars aimed to decide, left to peaceful arbitration, what a vastly different world this might be to-day!

Besides, war is becoming more and more expensive. With all the modern improvements in the implements of warfare, the destruction of life and property which must result from any future war will be simply appalling. By the monster machine guns, whole regiments could be mown down like grain before a reaper's sickle. By the powerful torpedoes the strongest war vessel afloat could be blown to pieces and sunk beneath the waves before a single man could be rescued.

Can nations be so blind as to hurl themselves into a conflict that must be so terrible in its results? May all the Krupp and Gatling guns be consumed by rust, and all the huge warships rot in their harbor, ere we shall see that day.

Another reason why the arbitrament of war should cease is found in the fact

that it fails to secure or advance its object, namely,—to establish justice. History tells of its "utter and shameful insufficiency." In all the long catalogue of wars which have lacerated the world, there are very few in which the justice of the cause counted for anything in determining the result.

In war *might makes right*, and the side that can produce the most men and the most money to equip them is the side that will win. Reason and judgment, by which alone justice can be established, are dethroned, and the determination of results is given over to the superiority of force or to chance.

The feelings which usually result from such a decision are too well known. How is it in the case of our late civil war? We believe that right prevailed. Not so with the South. They were beaten, but not pacified. Though nearly thirty years have passed, they have not yet forgotten the bitterness of their defeat and continue to mourn over their lost cause. Could there have been some peaceful settlement, there never would have been any cause for these undying feelings of animosity.

How often, too, it has been the case that after years of fruitless war, and the criminal sacrifice of millions of human lives, peace has been restored on the same basis as existed before the war.

Our last war with Great Britain is a striking example of this. The object as stated by the United States government to its commissioners appointed to treat for peace, was "to obtain a satisfactory stipulation against impressment, one which should secure under our flag protection to our crew," and it further declared that "if this encroachment was not provided against, the United States have appealed to arms in vain."

Yet, after the war had been waged for more than three years; after our commerce had been completely destroyed; after the whole Atlantic coast had been devastated, villages laid in ashes and the capitol itself seized and burned; after the entire country had been thrown into gravest financial distress; the government, deeming it unwise to longer prosecute the war, accepted a treaty of peace without any stipulation from Great Britain against impressment. According to its own

declaration, *therefore*, it had appealed to arms in vain.

We come now to the consideration of the *lawfulness* of war. Whatever apology or excuses may have been urged for it in the past dark ages, it is altogether inconsistent with a civilization based upon Christian principles. Indeed, it is hard to understand how the Christian church has been able to harmonize the teachings of the New Testament with its practice.

True, the Scriptures contain no direct command: "Thou shalt not engage in war;" but there can be no doubt as to the interpretation of Christ's words when He said to Peter: "Put up thy sword into the scabbard; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

The whole tenor of the Gospel is against war. Listen to some of its precepts: "Have peace with one another," Mark ix: 50; "Avenge not yourselves," Rom xii: 19; "Recompense to no man evil for evil," Rom xii, 17; "Ye have heard that it hath been said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;' but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." Matt. v, 38, 39.

What evidence do these passages convey to us as to the lawfulness of war? Is not its very character grossly inconsistent with these teachings? If they do not expressly forbid the act of war, they *do* forbid the spirit and disposition which lead to war, and without which war is impossible.

We know that the early Christians refused to engage in war, believing with undoubting confidence that Christ had positively forbidden it. Indeed, we are told that "during the first two hundred years of the history of the Christian church, not the name of a Christian soldier is upon record."*

* "The War System," Rev. Ruen Thomas, D. D.

When urged to become soldiers, their reply was explicit: "I am a Christian, therefore I cannot fight." Soldiers and Christians were considered separate characters, and it was not until their Christianity became partially corrupt that they attempted to harmonize the two.